

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

VOL. IX. No. 7.] LONDON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1806. [PRICE 10D.]

" I am not disposed to under-value the resources of this country ; but, notwithstanding any inauspicious aspect the present affairs of India may be supposed to bear, I am still sanguine enough to hope that the day is much nearer, when the resources of India will administer aid to the revenues of this country, than that, on which we are to apprehend that India will call for aid from the finances of Great Britain." Mr. Dundas's (now Lord Melville) Speech in the House of Commons, May 24, 1791.

193]

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

NEW MINISTRY. (Continued from p. 176.) The appointment of Lord Ellenborough to a seat in the cabinet is, as it has been represented, certainly a measure the propriety of which, is, to say the least of it, very questionable. Merely as a cabinet minister, if we could forget his other high situation, I, for my part, should have no objection to Lord Ellenborough ; for, though there have been differences of opinion, as to political matters, in which he took some part ; yet, he has, from the beginning, shown himself a steady friend to the inquiries into abuses, and, in the memorable case of the Duke of Athol, when so many other lords, for reasons best known to themselves, chose to remain silent, the Lord Chief Justice manfully stood forward in the cause of the people and of honour. The enemy of speculators and of jobbers, be he who he may, is, politically speaking, my friend ; and, therefore, I should with great pleasure see Lord Ellenborough in the cabinet, were he not a judge ; but, being a judge, his appointment to a seat in the cabinet is assuredly not very consistent, and, indeed, not at all consistent, with that great principle of our constitution, that the *executive* powers of the state should be ever kept entirely distinct from those of the *judiciary*. This has, by all the celebrated writers upon our constitution, been considered not merely as a great principle, but as the main principle ; and, a strict adherence to it has always been regarded as essential, nay, as absolutely necessary, to the real liberty of the subject, which, after all, being truly defined, consists in *freedom from oppression*, and, whoever will trace this freedom will find a security for it no where but in the courts of justice. As the means of obviating the possibility of all danger upon this score, it has been suggested, that, when the cabinet shall have, if, unfortunately, they should have, to discuss questions relating to prosecutions, or actions, that may, in consequence of such discussions, be brought before him, in his capacity of judge, he may *keep away from the cabinet*.

[194

But, is it possible that any one should not perceive the futility of this ? Suppose a case of libel, for instance. The Lord Chief Justice would not attend for the purpose of giving his sanction to the prosecution ; but, if the libel should have arisen from a general censure upon the ministry in a body, or upon any measure of the ministry, would not the Lord Chief Justice be, to all intents and purposes a *party* ? And, would it not be contrary to every principle of our laws and our constitution to make a man a judge in his own case ? Nor, is it only in cases of libel that the danger must appear to every one : there are those of rioting for certain purposes ; of sedition ; of treason ; and, in short, of all kinds connected at all with a disapprobation of, or an opposition to, the measures of the administration. Our ideas of a court of justice are, that there we are to be heard before persons, not only of wisdom and of perfect integrity, but of impartiality as perfect. And, for the security of this impartiality ; for the prevention of the operation of the frailties of human nature against us, we expect to find perfect independence ; a perfect absence of temptation, from any selfish feeling, to do us injustice. And, I ask, is it probable, nay is it *possible*, that, in a case of libel levelled at the whole of a ministry, a member of that ministry can come to the trial with a mind like a sheet of blank paper ? For these reasons, and, as to the cases that may occur, many of other descriptions might be mentioned ; for these reasons, and not for any reason of a party or a political complexion, it is to be desired, and, indeed, hoped, that some means of arranging the cabinet, without including the Lord Chief Justice, may be found out and adopted. Such an arrangement must, too, be desired by the Lord Chief Justice himself even more, one would think, than by any other person ; for, God knows, the multiplicity of penal statutes has rendered his office of judge so laborious as to leave him very little time for attendance at cabinet councils, and no time at all for that inquiry and reflexion, which are necessary to bring to such a council a mind so matured as

to be able to decide upon the wisdom of political measures. On the score of *responsibility*, too (and, let us hope, that responsibility will *now* be again considered as something real), is there not an insuperable difficulty? The judge holds his office during good behaviour; but, it is during good behaviour as a judge; and, it does not appear how he can be at all punished as a cabinet minister unless he be also punished as a judge, which, nevertheless cannot be, unless he behave ill as a judge. In short, there is, as I think it must appear to all the world, so evident an incompatibility in the two stations, that I cannot help once more expressing a hope, that some means will be discovered, and applied, for removing this cloud from between us and the cheering prospect that is opening to our view.—There is, in the formation of the cabinet, another instance of incompatibility, which is, indeed, of less importance, at least in a constitutional point of view, but to which I advert with, if possible, still greater reluctance; and that is, the union, in the person of that most respectable and truly honourable nobleman, Lord Grenville, the offices of Auditor of the Exchequer and First Lord of the Treasury; an incompatibility, which, to have seen sanctioned by an act of parliament, must have given all the friends of the new ministry the greater pain from the circumstance, that there was so very easy, so very natural, and so very laudable, a way of preventing it from ever being a subject of one moment's difficulty, or hesitation. It is with extreme reluctance, and not till after a long and mortifying struggle in my mind, that I make this a subject of remark. But, the measure has occasioned general comment; I have spoken of it with none but friends of the noble lord; I have found them unanimous in their regret; and I cannot refrain from avowing, that, in that regret, I amply participate. Men observe, and it is impossible that they should not observe, that Lord Grenville has a large pension secured to himself, with a very competent reversion to Lady Grenville, besides this Auditorship; that he has a private fortune, which renders these a superfluity; and, when they are told, that, in regard to demands upon the public, the private *wealth* of the party ought not to be taken into consideration, they justly reply, that, neither, then, ought the private *poverty* of the party; but, they well know, and, indeed the knowledge of it is universal, that such poverty is, every day that we live, made the ground; and, in many instances, the sole ground, of demands upon the public. The principle, to be good for any thing, must ap-

ply to both cases; for, men will hardly be brought to allow, that the private poverty of a statesman ought to operate against the public, unless it be allowed, that his private wealth ought to operate in its favour. The Auditorship is a sinecure, or it is not; if it be not, then there is a clear incompatibility, which no law can remove; and, if it be a sinecure, what an excellent opportunity was here offered for suppressing it, or, at least, for reserving it for the purpose of preventing the necessity of some new grant of the public money! When the Auditorship was first mentioned as an obstacle to Lord Grenville's being First Lord Commissioner of the Treasury, every one exclaimed: an *obstacle*! Good God, what is there to do but resign it! Every one exclaimed: are these times for public men to adopt the maxim of "getting all you can and keeping all you get!" These are, indeed, not the times. And, when every speech, whether from the throne or from the ministers, do, and must, call upon the people for *sacrifices*; when the sacrifices demanded of the people are such as are to be justified upon no ground but that of hard and imperious necessity, shall the first, the very first act of the new ministry, say to the people, in language not to be misunderstood, that the person ostensibly at the head of them is willing to make no sacrifice at all? It is, indeed, said by some, that, as a *sacrifice*, Lord Grenville would cheerfully have given up the Auditorship, but that, it would have had the appearance of courting popular applause at the expense of his predecessors and others. I do not say, that this might not have been the motive of his lordship; but, I am decidedly of opinion, that it is a refinement upon magnanimity and disinterestedness, which will with great difficulty be comprehended by vulgar minds, especially when those minds hardly ever experience a moment's relief from the dunning of the tax-gatherer. The people remember the circumstances attendant upon the case of *Astlett*; they remember, and will long remember, those circumstances, which gave rise to so novel and so dangerous and so . . . (but I will not further characterise it) a precedent in British jurisprudence; and, they see the mighty and all-subduing arm of parliament resorted to; they see it resorted to a second time, in so short a space, for the purpose, with respect to this office, of "solving close impossibilities, and making them kiss;" they all see this with disapprobation, and, this disapprobation is, in the friends of Lord Grenville, not entirely unmingled with shame; shame not at all diminished by the eulogium upon his lordship,

which the occasion drew forth from George Rose.—As to *omissions* in the new arrangements, the nation feels some degree of disappointment at Mr. WHITBREAD's not being placed in a high place of trust and confidence. For his services he, in all likelihood, wants not money; but, there are no honours, there are no marks by which merit can be distinguished, that would be too much for him. He has given proofs of public spirit and public virtue seldom surpassed, and of talents, industry, and perseverance that yield to nothing of the kind ever witnessed in this country. Were he to die, a monument and a public funeral it would, indeed, become the parliament to vote and the King to sanction; and, if he live, we may, I trust, live in hopes of seeing him honoured and confided in by those under whose sway we are to live. This is not said upon a supposition that he is *not* to be honoured and confided in. The *time* may, by some, be regarded as improper, though I must avow, that I can imagine no time so suitable; for I am persuaded, that, were a distinguished mark of royal and ministerial approbation conferred on him, nothing would more strongly tend to conciliate the affections of the people, and to inspire them with that confidence in the integrity of the new ministry, which is so necessary to the success of those great measures which the honour and the safety of the country demand.—Mr. FRANCIS, too, will, by all those who have been able to obtain a knowledge of the affairs of India, be regretted in his absence from the Governorship of India, or, at least, from the Board of Controul. Lord Minto is an able, an industrious, a zealous and an honourable man; but, when one considers how Lord Minto has been occupied, it is no disparagement to him to say, that it is impossible, that he should be, at the present time in particular, so proper a person as Mr. Francis for presiding at the Board of Controul. Mr. Francis has been twenty years engaged in an attention to the affairs of India. His several speeches upon India Affairs form a complete digest of the voluminous and multifarious publications relative thereunto. To him, and to him alone, it is that we owe what knowledge we possess upon the subject. Since the first passing of the bill, by means of which the Pitts scaled the ramparts of power, and by the corruptions emanating from which they so long kept possession of the fortress, hurling destruction upon all around it; from that day, heedless alike of the clamours of a misguided people, stirred up by the arts of mercenary and ambitious hypocrites, and of the insolent

sarcasms of triumphant fraud and of conscious impunity; unwearied by the disgusting listlessness of those from whom he was anxious to obtain attention to his statements; from that fatal day, has he persevered in detecting the frauds and the falsehoods, in exposing the imbecillity and the impudence, and in warning the country of the consequences to be apprehended from the measures, of those men who have had the principal share in the management of India Affairs. And now; now, when those affairs have been brought into a state, in which they can no longer go on; now, when his opponents are proved to be all that he has ever said of them; now, when all his predictions are completely verified; now, when it is seen and confessed, that, if his wise councils had been listened to, the load of dishonour and of *taxes* that are coming upon us, on account of our East-India colonies, would have been avoided; now, even now, are we to see those councils tacitly condemned by his exclusion from the departments connected with India? At this moment, there are before parliament, the grounds of a grave discussion relative to the conduct of a late Governor General, who had been recalled and replaced by another. That other is dead, leaving India in a state, by all acknowledged to be most critical. Who, under the present circumstances; who, but Mr. Francis, did the nation look to as a successor? But, if his age were an obstacle, though it was none in the case of Lord Cornwallis, it could be no obstacle to his being placed at the head of the Board of Controul, where he would have been able, and much more able than any other man in England, to unravel that complication of deceptions, that mystery of iniquity, which, for the purposes of future security as well as for those of justice for the past, now ought to be unravelled. In parliament, however, he will still be; there we may hope long to see him; and there, though not so greatly useful as he elsewhere might have been, we may rest assured that he will be eminently useful in prosecuting that inquiry, which has been called for, not by the motion of a single member, but by the unanimous voice of all the honest and honourable part of the nation.—“Why,” says some place-hunting, time-serving slave, “here’s this Cobbett attacking the new ministry already! An angel from heaven would not please him.” As to angels from heaven, I never expect to see any; and, as to *attacking* the new ministry, I have neither done it, nor do I intend to do it. I have only pointed out that which I think is wrong, and this, upon similar occasions, I shall continue to do, let who

will be concerned in it. When there are in power a ministry, whom, taken all together, you regard as capable and sincerely disposed to serve the country for its good, it is your duty to give them a general support; and, as a general support cannot be given without overlooking some, and even many, things that you do not quite approve of, to act consistently, you must overlook many things, and some of them of considerable importance, because you must, in all human affairs, take the good with the bad, and make an estimate upon a fair view of the whole. On the contrary, when you see the offices of state in the hands of a set of men, of whose want of capacity or of disposition well to serve the country you are convinced, your main object ought to be to cause them to be removed. Duty may, in certain cases, call upon you to commend their conduct; but, if, in the pursuit of your principal object, you pass over in silence things which, in themselves, might be entitled to commendation, you are not to be blamed. But, as your duty may, in special cases, compel you to applaud the conduct of those whom you ought to wish to see removed; so it may, in special cases, compel you to censure the conduct of those whom it is, and ought to be, your wish to see remain in power. Such are the principles, by which I have always been actuated, and it is upon these principles that I have thought it right to submit the above remarks. I have anxiously wished to see Lord Grenville in power; for, though I have never pretended to represent him as a man of the very first rate abilities; though I have certainly never thought him a man of great profundity, particularly in matters relating to political economy; I have always regarded him as a steady, a wise, and an upright statesman, having neither tinsel nor trick whereby to lure, cajole, and deceive the people; and, as to matters of party, it is impossible to pass a higher eulogium upon him than to say, that, in the arrangement of the present ministry, he has shown himself to be the exact contrary of Mr. Pitt. Thus thinking of him, it was not without much consideration and much hesitation, that I made the retention of the Auditorship a subject of remark. But, all the circumstances taken into view, it was impossible for me consistently to pass it over in silence. I was not unaware, that, just at this time, when every eye was fixed upon him, remarks, such as I have made, could scarcely fail of producing some small degree of effect not favourable to his lordship; but, I was aware, too, that some few eyes might be fixed upon me; and, as it behoves us all to take care of our

own reputation, I think, that, upon this ground alone, the reader will be indulgent enough to discover an apology for what I have said. Nor, indeed, would the observing of a silence upon this subject have been to act fairly and justly towards the ministry in general; because, the effect of such silence must have been to excite, with regard to my rectitude as a writer, such suspicions as could not have failed to weaken the efforts, however feeble they may be, which, thinking as I do, it is my duty to make for the support of their power and for the success of their measures. Besides, the acts and omissions, of which I have thought it necessary to speak, are not *irretrievable*. There is yet time to correct what is amiss, if it be amiss; and, if it be not amiss, it is more than probable I shall be thought by the public to be in error, in which case I shall have hurt nothing but the patience of those who have read what I have written.—By way of close to this article, I cannot refrain from once more expressing my hope, that the new Chancellor of the Exchequer will cautiously forbear from all attempts to imitate his predecessor, in his financial statements to the House of Commons. A very good opportunity will be offered him for making us acquainted with the true state of our affairs. It should be such as we can believe because we understand it, and not because we have no understanding. *Faith* in the funds, is a phrase of singular propriety; but, this is precisely that sort of faith which will now be of no use, even in supporting the power of a ministry. All attempts at imitation, such as I have been here speaking of will fail. Let nothing, therefore, tempt Lord Henry Petty to believe, that he shall succeed in the way that his predecessor succeeded. The taste of the people has changed. They will never bear a second heaven-born minister, any more than they will a second Young Roscius; and, if Lord Henry Petty were to set up for one, his fate would certainly resemble that of Miss Mudie, by the means of whom Kemble so judiciously, and so politely contrived to convince the town of its puerile folly. No: no imitations. No boasts about the *flourishing* state of a country with 1,200,000 paupers, out of a population of less than 9,000,000 of souls. A plain, unadorned representation of the situation of the nation's affairs will do much towards rendering men patient under their burdens; but, without such a statement, they never will be patient, or, at least, they never will be cheerful; never will entertain that hope of better times, with which it is now so necessary to inspire them. I have no doubt

Discounts. 4



upon the subject of the new Chancellor's intentions; but so earnest is my wish with regard to it, that I cannot help repeating an expression of it.

THE ARMY.—That some *great measure* relative to our military means of defence ought to be taken, and that it *must* be taken, in order to enable us either to make war, or peace, every man appears to be fully convinced. A like conviction must, of course, prevail as to the necessity of a *great change of plan*; for, if the present plans were good, there would be no need to talk of any new measure. Yet are some of the newspapers, the only object of whose editors is that sort of popularity which leads to the wide circulation of their papers, or, in other words, to private emolument, endeavouring to excite a prejudice against the measures to be adopted, without having even heard what is to be the nature of those measures. A striking instance of this appears in a paragraph of the *Morning Post* newspaper of the 13th instant, upon which, after having submitted it to the reader, I shall offer a remark or two. “Ministers, we understand, continue to bestow the most serious attention upon the proposed plan of reform in our military system, the task of revising which, is said to be committed to the War Secretary of State, Mr. Windham. The hostility of this gentleman to the Volunteer System is well known, and should its abolition, as report states, be a part of his plan, it will be curious to observe how his coadjutors in office, who were so instrumental in its establishment, and so loud in its praise, will conduct themselves on the occasion. Upon this subject, perhaps, as much as upon any other whatever, is a difference of opinion likely to arise among the members of the new cabinet; but until we hear something more upon the subject, until the proposed plan becomes in some degree developed and explained, any particular observations upon the subject would be not only premature, but highly improper. Enough however, is known of Mr. Windham's sentiments with respect to the Volunteer System, to leave no doubt, that, if his whimsical fancy, be permitted to take unbounded flight, that unjustly aspersed and vilified establishment will be abolished for one certainly not more advantageous to the country, and infinitely less splendid and respectable in the eyes of the world. The trifling inconveniences attendant upon the volunteer system, have frequently been dwelt upon by Mr. Windham with more pleasantry than justice, and happily

“his observations upon this subject have never made any serious impression upon his hearers. But, supposing all his notions upon this question to be true, to what purpose are they produced? He has doubtless stood nearly alone in his enjoyment of this part of his own parliamentary exhibitions. Would the inconveniences he enumerates, even admitting them to exist to the full extent of his imagination, be a set-off to one hundredth part of the advantages they accompany. Are we to abandon for them the immense benefit of restoring the military, without losing the commercial character of the country; of refuting the traitors who made it believed in France, that the Sovereign dare not trust his subjects with arms, and of rendering the enemy an ignominious spectacle to Europe, for threats unattempted to be enforced, at a time when all their means had been so ostentatiously completed. In the present stage of the business, it would be improper to pursue the subject any farther; but we shall in due time resume the subject; and offer such observations as a candid and impartial review of the proposed system shall appear to us to demand”.—That the eagerness to attack must be very great, when it will not allow the assailant time to find out his object, the reader will certainly agree; but, this eagerness is, happily, attended with such evident marks of malignant design, that it is very likely to counteract itself. Yes, the task of revising the military system is assuredly to be committed to Mr. Windham; for, if it were not, I can hardly think that the power of bestowing Governorships of colonies and the like would have been sufficient to tempt him to make such a sacrifice as he must now make of his ease and his health. His “hostility to the volunteer system”, if hostility it must be called, is also well known; and, his taking a part in the new ministry is, with me at least, a sure foundation for hoping, that something is to be done for so changing that system as to render it useful as far as it will remain, and to take away its baneful effects with regard to the regular army. If this be not done, nothing good can be done. Nor can I perceive, here, any ground whatever for differences of opinion in the cabinet. How many measures are adopted by every ministry, and given up again upon trial? And, has not this system been sufficiently tried? And, are not the circumstances materially altered, since the system was first adopted? We want an *efficient* and a *cheap* defence; and, is not every man now convinced, that an efficient

defence is not to be found in men not under military law, not compellable to march from their homes, and not able to march if they were willing? Is there a man who believes that regular soldiers can be raised at the present high bounty? Can any one think it possible for the nation to go on in this way? I sincerely believe, that there is not one sensible man in the whole kingdom who does not regard it as impossible. Why, then, should there be, in the cabinet, any difference of opinion upon the subject?—What does the writer mean by “a less *splendid* system,” proceeding from the “whimsical fancy” of Mr. Windham? The system, of which Mr. Windham has always been an advocate is a system of *real* splendour. It contemplates an efficient force; a force with which we might defy the utmost power of France; a force permanent, safe to ourselves, and formidable to our enemy; a force somewhat like the force of France, and not like that which the French had to meet in the Tyrolean and Austrian territory, and over which they marched without appearing to know that it was in existence; a force at once efficient, cheap, and honourable.—What! are we still to be insulted with assertions, that the volunteer system has a tendency to “*restore* the military, without “losing the commercial character of the “nation?” Are we to be told this, now, when every one is convinced, that the great tendency of the system is to *degrade*, nay, totally to *extinguish*, the military character of the nation; and when we have before our eyes the facts, that the inspectors, the reviewers, the adjutants, the aid-majors, and others appointed by the king to act with the volunteer corps in and about London, have become, with few exceptions, the mere flatterers and toad-eaters of these mercantile red-coats? To destroy the commercial character of the nation never, from any one expression of Mr. Windham, could be considered as his wish. He is much too wise a man not to perceive, that, without commerce, and particularly maritime commerce, these islands would be nothing; but, if he does not entertain the wish to see the *predominance* of trade and commerce, its insolent and insupportable predominance, brought down in such a way as to give the liberal, and particularly the military and naval, professions a fair chance for obtaining public estimation, he is not the man that I take him for, and, I am fully convinced, that he is not a man for these times. Nor is it enough to entertain the *wish*. He must *act* upon some such view of the subject, or he would do well at once to give way; for

he may be assured, that no half-measure will do, that no man or men will succeed by such a measure, that the nation is to be taught only by woeful experience, and that the task of forming and acting upon an efficient plan is reserved for a future day.—As to the insinuation, that Mr. Windham's plan would render the country an ignominious spectacle to Europe, by causing it to be believed, that “the Sovereign dare not trust “his subjects with arms,” I can only say, that such a plan would be a most unwise one, and that, for that reason alone, I am convinced it never was contemplated by Mr. Windham, who, besides, if I understand his public declarations, is of opinion, that, if the people cannot safely be trusted with arms for the defence of the country, it is useless to attempt to take any measures whatever for its defence. But, his main object is to provide a permanent and efficient military force to meet an enemy of equal or even of superior numbers; not a force made up of fools entrapped, of men held in bondage, of half-starved paupers, of vagabonds, and of thieves whose punishment has been commuted for the honour of serving the King. With this force at command, always ready and always willing, the people, voluntarily armed, and wearing nothing like regimentals, and never going from their homes, would, in the maritime counties, be ready to act, and would, so prepared, be able to render essential service; but, to suppose, that any other than regular soldiers are fit to be opposed in battle to the armies of France, is a mark of as perfect insanity as ever was a passport to Bedlam.—To talk of the “whimsical fancies” of Mr. Windham was the custom of the Pitts, and a notable instance of their envious aspersions, in this way, was exhibited in the smooth sneaking pamphlet of Mr. Long; but, compare what has been said by Mr. Windham, upon the subject of the army, with what has been said and done by his opponents, particularly by that great and destructive projector, Mr. Pitt; make this comparison, and then say, to whom the origin of “whimsical fancies” is justly to be ascribed. We have paid dearly enough for the fancies of Mr. Windham's opponents; dearly enough have we paid for the rejection of his advice; for the sneers with which the band of gentlemen pensioners treated his remonstrances and his warnings; corruption and inherent baseness prevailed over the exertions of his honourable and enlightened mind, and, greatly do I fear, that it is too late to recover from the fatal consequences. He has done his duty thus far; if his country fall it is no fault of his;

and, if he cannot now succeed in the adoption of the measures which he has in contemplation, he may, with a conscience perfectly clear, leave the nation to be schooled by calamity.—Those who think that these sentiments of mine proceed from any thing of a personal or a party feeling are greatly deceived. That I entertain the highest possible degree of respect for Mr. Windham personally every one that knows me must be convinced; but, I beg my readers to remember, that I was *second* to no man in urging the necessity of exalting the military profession; and, I beg them now to attend to my words, when I say, that my applause of Mr. Windham will depend upon his *measures*. They will never see me the blind partizan of any body. My opinions are my own; and, for the promulgation of them to have its fair chance, they must be known to be my own. But, in asserting my claim to my due share of the merit of having prepared the public mind for the great change which will now, in all likelihood, be adopted, I beg to be understood as not putting my judgment upon an equality with that of the gentleman, of whom I have been here speaking; for, most sincerely do I declare, that I am convinced, that no man in the kingdom is to be compared to him in point of knowledge and of wisdom, as far as is connected with subjects of this sort. How to make an army, a real and safe military force, for his country; how to put that country in a state safely to bid defiance to its enemies; these have been the objects of his constant study; and, when we consider the greatness of the mind that has been thus directed, is it wonderful that it should have a claim to pre-eminence? It is not to be supposed, that his opinions and views are not to meet with any modification in the cabinet. His plans may be *improved* there I have no doubt; for there is not now a cabinet of noses; but, what I insist upon, is, that, as the person at the head of all plans of this sort, he is entitled to the perfect confidence of the nation.

AFFAIRS OF INDIA.—From the report of the proceedings in parliament, it will be perceived, that, upon the motion of Lord Folkestone, a statement is to be laid before parliament relative to the number of troops sent to India, subsequent to the renewal of the Company's charter, in the year 1793. When this statement comes, let the public attend to it; for, in it will they see to what an extent this hood-winked nation has been drained for the purposes of *commercial* ambition. We generally look upon merchants as a sort of peaceable philanthropic creatures; but, we have not found our East India Direc-

tors to possess much of these qualities. To support them and theirs, our country has been drained to the dregs. At their call we have sent away the means, of every sort, which we now stand in need of; and instead of giving us a compensation for those drains, they are now, and I beseech the people to mark what I say, *coming to us for money*; yea, to us, who are called upon to make sacrifices in order to save our native land from subjugation! The speech of Mr. Dundas, now Lord Melville, from which my motto is taken, is not a singular instance. He went on year after year, making, with a modesty so peculiar to him, assertions of the same sort, in contradiction to the opinions of Mr. Francis. *Now*, the truth is come out. It can no longer be disguised, either by him, or by those directors, who, so generously gave him a pension of 2,000*l.* a year for life, and which pension, observe, we, the cajoled people of England, must pay! In these India affairs, the Pitts and Dundases have left the new ministry a precious legacy. The long score of 13 years of fraud and of profligate expenditure is now to be settled; and, shall we settle it, shall we be taxed to pay it, including even the pensions granted by the Company, without a full investigation into the causes of the deficit? Already have we been taxed to the amount of two millions to pay to this Company that owe us seven millions at least; and shall we be again taxed, for the purpose of paying more to them? I would fain see the minister that would have the assurance to propose such a measure. No: if the East-India Company come to us for relief, let us, as parish officers do, inquire into their means; let us see what property they have; let us take their affairs into our hands, and see if we cannot, by the aid of men different from the Pitts and Dundasses, manage them better. The deceived people, who were induced to set up such a howl about "chartered rights," and against Mr. Fox's India Bill, in 1784, will now be convinced of their folly; they will now be convinced, that that bill would have prevented their being loaded with millions upon millions of taxes. This may make them think, and put them upon their guard against future attempts at imposture.

MR. COCHRANE JOHNSTONE.—This gentleman's very serious grievance was briefly stated in the Political Register, Vol. VIII. p. 18 and 55, where a determination was expressed to renew and more fully to enter into it, upon the opening of the present session of parliament. Hitherto things have been in a state to prevent me from act-

ing upon this determination; but, I certainly adhere to it, and my readers may be assured, that no consideration connected with the change of ministry (other than that of justice being done to the party), shall divert me from it. This is one amongst many cases that require to be seriously considered by the cabinet, in order to render effectual that *great change*, which they contemplate in the army.

* * * The Prospectus of the PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY is again inserted, because, through an error of the printer, the word *Register* was, in a great part of the impression of last week, put instead of the word *History*.—A trifling alteration is, also, at the suggestion of several gentlemen, made as to the mode of *binding* the volumes; and, a consequent little deduction in the proposed price.

PROSPECTUS

OF

Cobbett's Parliamentary History,

Which, in the compass of Sixteen Volumes, royal octavo, double page, is to contain a full and accurate report of all the recorded proceedings, and of all the speeches, in both Houses of Parliament, from the earliest times to the year 1803, when the publication of Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates commenced.

Whoever has had frequent occasion to recur to the proceedings in parliament, of former times, must have experienced those difficulties, which it is the object of the proposed work to remove. Merely to find the several works, wherein is contained an account of the parliamentary proceedings, is, at this day, no easy matter, some of them being very scarce, and others excessively voluminous. Hardly any of them, those of the last twenty years excepted, are to be purchased regularly at the booksellers'. The far greater part of them are to be come at by accident only; and, of course, sometimes not to be obtained at all.—But, supposing them all to be at hand, the price of them is no trifling object; and, in many cases, must present a difficulty not to be easily, or, at least, willingly, surmounted. Of these works, taken in their chronological order, the first is, the Parliamentary or Constitutional History, in 24 volumes; the second, the Oxford Debates, in 2 volumes; the third, Chandler's Debates, in 22 volumes; the fourth, Greys' Debates, in 10 volumes; the fifth, Almon's Debates, in 24 volumes; the sixth, Debrett's Debates (now in the hands of various booksellers), in 63 volumes. These works are not to be purchased, if to be purchased at all, under 110*l.* sterling. But still, with all these, the information wanted is very imperfect, without perpetually having recourse to the Journals of the two Houses, which Journals occupy upwards of a hundred volumes in folio: so that, the price of a complete set of the works, in this way,

cannot, upon an average of purchases, be reckoned at less than 150 pounds.—These difficulties got over, another, and a still more formidable obstruction to the acquiring of information is found, not merely in the number and the bulk of the volumes, but also in the want of a good arrangement of the contents of most of them, and, further, in the immense load of useless matter, quite unauthentic, and very little connected with the real proceedings of parliament, to be found in many of them. In the two first-mentioned works, we find a narrative of battles, sieges, and of domestic occurrences. The real proceedings of parliament form but a comparatively small proportion of them, whole pamphlets of the day, and very long ones, being, in many places, inserted just as they were published and sold; and, when we come down even to the Debates by Almon and Debrett (taking in Woodfall and others occasionally), we find, that, in numerous instances, three-fourths of the volume consists of papers, laid before parliament, of mere momentary utility, repeated in subsequent and more correct statements, and now nothing but an expence, and, what is much worse, an incumbrance to the reader, and a constantly intervening obstacle to his researches; to which may be added, with respect to all the Debates from Almon's, inclusive, downwards, that there is a total want of all that aid, which is afforded by well contrived running-titles, tables, and indexes, and which is so necessary in every voluminous work, particularly if it relate to the transac-

tions of a long series of years.—With a view of removing all these difficulties, and of putting the public in possession of an account of the Proceedings in Parliament previous to the year 1803, (when Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates commenced) as complete as that which has met with such general approbation in this last-mentioned work, the present publication is undertaken. The Sixteen Volumes, of which the proposed work will consist, and the first of which is now in the press, will be printed in the same form and size, and with the same sort of character, as those of the Political Register and Parliamentary Debates, with this difference only, that the character of this work will, in the same compass, introduce one-fifth more of matter. The volumes, respectively, are to embrace the periods here mentioned; to wit:

Vol. I. From the Conquest, 1066, to the meeting of the Long Parliament in 1640.

II. From the meeting of the Long Parliament, to the death of Charles I. in 1648.

III. From the Commencement of the Commonwealth to the death of Queen Anne, in 1714.

IV. From George I. to the end of the Seventh Session of the Eighth Parliament in 1741.

V. From the New Parliament in 1741, to 1774.

VI. From the New Parliament in 1774, to its dissolution in 1780.

VII. } From the New Parliament in 1780,
VIII. } to its dissolution in 1784.

IX. } From the New Parliament in 1784,
X. } to its dissolution in 1790.

XI. } From the New Parliament in 1790,
XII. } to its dissolution in 1796.

XIII. } From the New Parliament in 1796,
XIV. } to its dissolution in 1800.

XV. From the New Parliament in 1800, to its dissolution in 1802.

XVI. From the New Parliament in 1802, to the commencement of Cobbett's Parliamentary Debates, November the 22d, 1803.

Each of these volumes will contain considerably more print than is contained in the whole of Hume's History of England, which occupies eight common octavo volumes. When, therefore, it is recollected, that so large a part of the several works, above-enumerated, are taken up with matter, as before described, wholly unconnected, or having but a very remote connexion with the proceedings in parliament, and entirely destitute of authenticity; when it is recollected also,

how much room is saved by the abbreviation of words descriptive of titles and of constantly-occurring phrases of courtesy, the reader will not be surprised, that the whole of the authentic and useful records of the proceedings of the parliament of England, of that of Great Britain, and of that of the United Kingdom, down to the year 1803, will be comprised in the Sixteen Volumes of this work, which will, upon the best computation that can be made, contain as much print as 140 common octavo volumes.—In relation to the earliest times, the work will be compiled chiefly from the Records, the Rolls of of Parliament, and from the most reputable ancient writers of English History. From the reign of Henry VIII. inclusive, we have the additional aid of the Journals of the House of Lords; and from that of Edward VI. that of the Journals of the House of Commons. As to the Speeches, they will, of course, be collected from the several works, wherein, upon careful examination and comparison, they are found to have been the most fully and accurately recorded. The precise words of motions, resolutions, &c. &c. will be copied from the Journals themselves, and not from unauthorized publications. As a book of Parliamentary Precedents, the work, by the aid of its tables and indexes, will be even more complete than any one hitherto published. These tables and indexes will be constructed upon the excellent plan (with some little improvements) recommended by the Committee of the House of Commons, and afterwards adopted by the persons employed to make the indexes to the Journals.—With respect to information relative to those who have, at any time, made a conspicuous figure in parliament, or, indeed, who have been, for any considerable length of time, members of that body, it is not unnecessary to observe, that, in the parts of the work which will give an account of the assembling of the several new parliaments, since the time when records of this sort were first made, there will be complete Lists of the members of the House of Commons, and, from time to time, a state of the Peerage. These, together with an Index of Names, will enable the reader, not only to know, who has, at any time, been in parliament; but also to trace the parliamentary history and conduct of every distinguished member.—Considered as a collection of Public Papers, this work will be more complete than any one extant, in this country. It will contain Copies of all the Treaties, conventions, &c. &c. to which the rulers of this kingdom have, respectively, been parties, and which are, any where, upon record. All King's Speeches, Protests, Conferences,

Standing Orders, as well as all Petitions, Remonstrances, &c. &c. will be carefully inserted, in their proper places. At the close of the Parliamentary History of each reign, in the early periods, and of every session of parliament in the latter, will be given a List of the Acts passed during its continuance; also an account of the taxes imposed, of the supplies, of the subsidies to foreign powers, of the state of the revenue, of the value of money in relation to the price of provisions, &c. To prepare the materials for a work of such magnitude must necessarily require much labour and time. Nearly two years have already been, in great part, devoted to it; and, such has been the application bestowed, that a considerable part of the whole is in a state fit for the press. The first volume is actually in the press, and will, at the latest, be published on the 15th of May next. The printer has engaged to complete it by the 1st day of that month; but, in order to avoid disappointment, a fortnight later, as the time of delivery from the publishers has been fixed on. The second volume will be published in August next; and, so on, a volume every quarter of a year till the whole be completed. This distance between the periods of publication will have many conveniencies attending it, and particularly that of leaving the young reader time to have gone through one volume before he has another to purchase.—The price of each volume, containing, as was observed, more print than eight common octavo volumes, will be 11. 10s. 6d., done up in extra boards, uncut; or 11. 11s. 6d. bound in Russia leather, in the same manner as the Political Register and the Parliamentary Debates: to be paid to the booksellers upon the delivery of each volume successively.—The first volume will be published at the time above fixed on, whether there be subscribers or not, and no difference will be made between the price to subscribers and to others; but, as it would be very grateful to the feelings of the compiler to see his arduous undertaking approved of and encouraged by the public, and as the number of copies, of the second volume must, of course, be regulated by the degree of success that he can reasonably count upon, he will not attempt to disguise, that he is very anxious to obtain a respectable list of subscribers at as early a period as possible.—The work will be published by Mr. BAGSHAW, Bow Street Covent Garden; and will be sold also by Mr. BUDD, Pall Mall, Mr. FAULDER, Bond Street, Messrs. BLACKS and PARRY, Leadenhall Street, and Mr. ARCHER, Dublin; to any of which persons subscribers are requested to send their names.

FATE OF THE FUNDS.

SIR,—I have attentively read your observations on the national debt, and knowing by experience the impartiality of the Weekly Register, I venture to send you my opinions on the same subject. If your proposition was simply that the public welfare of the nation must not be sacrificed for the claims of individuals, I should most heartily concur with you, and when it shall be proved, that the interest of the debt can no longer be paid, without ruin to the country, it must be lowered, and possibly, in the end, be altogether done away.—But, Mr. Cobbett, when you quit the strong ground of necessity, and the only justifiable ground that can be urged for so glaring a breach of national faith, as the extinction of the debt would involve us in; when you talk of loan-jobbers, blood-suckers, and contractors, as not having an equitable claim to their property, and when through them, you endeavour to weaken the claims of the stock-holders in general on the national faith, you strike at the root of every species of property. I have just as fair a claim to my dividends, as I have to the rents of my landed estate, and my houses. But, circumstances may arise, which may compel the legislature to withhold, or materially to tax my dividends, beyond the proportion of taxes which they may place on my land and houses.—If the legislature were to take such a step arbitrarily, or wantonly, most assuredly it would be an act of the grossest injustice, but the act which necessity compels Parliament to adopt, ceases to be unjust; and, here I agree with you, that such a necessity is likely to arise, if for some time longer the debt shall be increased, at the rate of ten or twelve millions a year. That it has not arisen *already*, is indeed most wonderful.—I am old enough to remember as a boy, the debt of this nation at 70 millions, and to have been told by a county member of that day, that when he heard Sir Robert Walpole affirm that the nation could well bear a debt of 100 millions without a national bankruptcy, he was almost mobbed by the landed interest, both in, and out of the house. In the space of half a century; that is, from 1755, to 1805; this debt has increased from 70 to 600 millions. The annual interest of it in the same proportion, and our expenses, if we had peace to-morrow, must at least be four times greater than they were in 1755.—In considering this subject, however, you must also consider the very great change which in fifty years has taken place, in the relative value of money, and in property of every description. There is scarcely a landed estate in this kingdom

which produced 500*l.* a year in 1755, that does not now pay 1,500*l.* a year to the proprietor, and many a much higher rent. Houses, generally speaking, pay now treble the rent that they did then, and in the same proportion every necessary of life, servants wages, &c. have been increased.—The only description of persons who suffer by this great change in the relative value of money, are those men, whose property was all in the funds fifty years ago, who then lived up to the interest of their fortunes, and still do so. Suppose a man to have been many years ago possessed of sixty thousand pounds, three per cents, and to have lived at 1500*l.* a year, he now finds his income of no more value than 500*l.* a year was when he came into life. But a landed man whose rental was 1500*l.* a year in 1755, has now a rental of 4,500*l.* a year, and can sell, if compelled to do so, for 28 or 30 years purchase, while the stock-holder if obliged to sell, gets 60*l.* for what in 1755 was worth 100*l.*—I can assure you that I never was directly, nor indirectly concerned in a loan in my life. But justice is due to every man, and I cannot see why loan-jobbers should be held up to public execration. We have jobbers of every description in this commercial country. How many are there who have made, and lost large fortunes by purchasing land and houses, in the last fifty years. To my knowledge, estates which in 1770 cost 30,000*l.* have been sold last year for 80 and 100,000*l.* And houses for treble what they cost in 1770.—If a speculator in 1783, had laid out 10,000*l.* at Brighton, in the purchase of land, not worth ten shillings a year to a farmer, he would have gained half a million sterling by the speculation. Without the prescience that would have enabled one man to gain so large a sum, barbers, pastry cooks, taylors, haberdashers, and attornies, have gained immensely by the purchase of land by the foot at Brighton, and at Margate also. Would you deprive these men of their property because they have been speculative jobbers?—We well know, that this nation is not able to raise within the year, the sums necessary for the public expenditure in war. Hence arose the funded system, commenced with the revolution, and continued to this day.—Has the nation at any period paid an enormous interest on the money borrowed? I believe in very few instances indeed more than 5 per cent, the legal interest of the country, and in most instances much less than 5 per cent. The profit upon loans, therefore, has not arisen from ministerial favour, nor from parliamentary carelessness, but from the fluctuations in the market after

the loan of each year has been made; and, though it is believed that Sir Francis Baring, Mr. Goldsmid, Mr. Angerstein, and others, have gained considerably by loans from 1793 to this day, yet Benfield lost half a million sterling by the loans that he had contracted for. The houses of Payne and Smith, Sir James Esdaile and many others, it is also believed, lost very considerably by their loans. But this is a question that applies merely to individuals. The only question for the nation is, whether at any period, by a combination amongst monied men, the minister was compelled to borrow at an usurious interest. I believe, upon inquiry it will be found that the nation through the whole of the war, has borrowed upon better terms than any man of landed property could borrow, even though he gave the best security for the interest, with an engagement to repay the principal at a given period. On this subject, it is my misfortune to speak from experience.—But, supposing it could be satisfactorily proved that by an artful and wicked combination amongst monied men, the minister and parliament had been compelled to borrow money at an usurious interest, is the stock-holder to forfeit his property for the villainy of loan-jobbers? No! The obvious and the fair mode of proceeding would be, by a bill of pains and penalties attaching only to the guilty. But, in my opinion, the guilt does not exist. Without being Mr. Pitt's panegyrist, I believe that he, as well as Lord Sidmouth, made the best possible bargains for the public that could be procured. The gambling in stocks, the rise and fall of omnium, is a business amongst individuals, much to be lamented undoubtedly, but the public has no concern in it. The minister who borrows money dear, when he could get it cheap merits impeachment; and, if parliament neglects its duty, by giving its sanction to an improvident bargain, I know not with what justice, redress can be obtained. I remember the censures cast upon Lord North for one loan in particular during the American war, when the omnium rose to 12 per cent. immediately after the bargain was concluded. But in that instance, the sudden rise was occasioned by an idea of a general peace under the mediation of the Emperor of Germany, and when the negotiation failed, the omnium fell, as suddenly as it rose. From a fluctuation in politics one of Mr. Pitt's loans bore a premium of 16 per cent, and one of Lord Sidmouth's, a discount just as large. Yet it would be unfair to argue, that Mr. Pitt made an improvident loan for the public, or that the men who dealt with Lord

Sidmouth were fools or idiots.—My opinion is, that every species of property in this kingdom is equally secure. But the stock-holder must know, that if the debt is swelled to a magnitude which incapacitates the nation from paying the interest of it, a partial bankruptcy must be the consequence. There is no legal remedy against a national act. But the stock-holder knows that his interest will be paid as long as the nation can pay it, without ruin to the people. He knows that he has no claim upon the nation for the principal, unless it chooses to pay him off at par. But still he possesses a property convertible into money at the price of the day, and he takes the chance of loss or gain. For the interest he has the strongest possible claim: the faith of the nation solemnly pledged to him, and continued for more than a century, never once violated in all that period; nor does the case which you quote in Mr. Pelham's administration alter the faith, because they who did not choose to subscribe to his plan, had the option of being paid for their stock at par.—Mr. Fox's sentiments I have reason to believe are similar to mine on this subject. It is not setting up a monied in opposition to a landed interest. The question is, to whom must a minister go when he wants to borrow money? Undoubtedly to those who have money to lend. You are not to inquire after you have taken his money whether it was gained fairly or unfairly. But if a minister can prove that the public has been defrauded by an individual, whether he be a contractor, a loan-jobber, a clerk in office, or a cabinet minister, it is his duty to prosecute him to conviction, and to compel him to repay the sum of which the public has been defrauded.—The largest fortune made in the seven years war, was made by an army contractor; was he ever accused of having defrauded the public? Would you now seize his children's money in the funds, or sell their landed estates for the public benefit, because their father was a successful contractor? Would you break the public faith with the loan contractors, because though they lent money to the nation at 5 per cent, they might have made 7, 8, or even 10 per cent by their bargain?—Nothing can be more dangerous, or more unjust than to make a distinction as to the superior right which an individual possesses to one part of his property over another. How much of the landed property of this kingdom and of Ireland, was violently and unjustly taken from the church and granted to the personal favourites of Henry the Eighth; almost the entire fortune of some persons, consists of church and abbey

lands, granted to their ancestors. How many in Ireland were dispossessed of their estates by Oliver Cromwell, and how many more subsequently by King William! If your arguments were just, why should not the stock-holder propose that the nation should resume all former grants of land, in order to perform their recent engagements? I have some land which has passed to me by descent from 1180, and why should not the stock-holder question my right, to what at that early period might have proceeded from an arbitrary grant of a despotic sovereign, with as much justice as I should deny his right to call upon the nation to comply with its solemn engagements to him?—As early as the reign of Queen Anne, when the funding system was in its infancy, Dean Swift predicted that a new order of men would spring up, and that in time the monied would bear down the landed interest of the country. This growing evil he imputed very truly to the revolution, which introduced continental connections, continental wars, and the Dutch system of funding, in order to attach monied men to the new government. But, though Swift lamented this change in the constitution, and the feeling of the country, he did not dispute the *right* which these new men had to their property. He even laments the increase of commerce as a public misfortune, because it lessened the consequence of the clergy, and of country gentlemen. But he does not recommend the breaking open the merchants warehouses, nor the destruction of their goods.—An idea has long prevailed with many, that the nation will not be able to pay the interest of its public debt. Mr. Thomas Pitt (Lord Camelford) entertained this opinion, and avowed it in the House of Commons at the peace of 1763. But his argument did not at all go to dispute the *right* of the public creditor to be paid, if the country had the power to pay him. Now we have a debt, and interest upon it, more than double what it was in 1763, yet still the interest is regularly paid. The funds it is true have been directly taxed both by Mr. Pitt, and Lord Sidmouth, but every other description of property has been taxed also at the same time.—The public confidence in the justice of the nation keeps up the funds, notwithstanding the enormous amount of debt, and the additions which must annually be made to it, if this war should continue. Yet no stock-holder can be so stupid as not to consider, that, making every allowance for the change which an increase of debt makes in the relative value of money, there must be a point, beyond which the funding sys-

tem cannot be carried. Though Sir Robert Walpole in 1739, was mistaken when he said that this nation though it could bear a debt of 100 millions, would be bankrupt if the debt exceeded that amount; though Mr. Thomas Pitt was equally mistaken when he conceived that in 1783, it could not pay the interest of a debt of 240 millions, yet, if the present debt should increase to one thousand millions, which it well may in a long war, there are few who will conceive that the nation can pay the interest on a debt of that amount. What, then, will be the question? Surely not as to the *right* of the stock-holder to receive his interest, but as to the inability of the nation to pay it.

A. Z.

FUND-DEALING CLERGYMEN.

SIR,—In your numbers for the 28th of Dec. and 18th of Jan. last, you animadverted, with your wonted energy of style, upon the conduct of two clergymen, who, in their zeal to promote the *patriotic* subscription at Lloyds' Coffee House, have stepped somewhat beyond the bounds which decency, and a due regard to the sanctity of their office, would have prescribed. I am no less an enemy than yourself to appeals, either to the vanity or the fears of people, in applications of this nature, particularly when those appeals are made by clergymen in their official capacity. At the same time, Sir, I think you have not acted with your usual candour in passing an indiscriminate censure upon the whole order, because some individuals of that order have (to use your own words) "shewn themselves to be of a party with the fund dealers," or "become the echo of the placard at Lloyd's." Having the honour of belonging to that respectable body (for so I believe the clergy are generally esteemed, and have often been admitted even by yourself) which you have attacked, it is natural that I should feel jealous of its credit, and anxious to assert and vindicate its general purity. I mean not, however, to offer any apology for the gentlemen, whose names you have mentioned; and, for the rest of the clergy, who have made collections in their churches, you have yourself suggested an apology, in a subsequent part of the paper above quoted, when you express a hope, that they have "in most instances acted with more alacrity than thought." But you appear to me, Mr. Cobbett, to have greatly over-rated the number of those clergymen, who have raised contributions in their parishes for the Lloyd's fund. A cursory inspection of the newspaper reports may convince any one, that they bear but a small

proportion to the collective body of the clergy, whose number in England and Wales is usually estimated at eleven thousand. It is evident, therefore, from this comparison, that a very considerable majority of them have had no share in the crime, which has provoked your displeasure. For myself, I entertained scruples upon the subject from the first, for the reasons so properly stated by the churchwarden of Ickleton, and determined, in consequence, to have no subscription in my own parish. My determination was confirmed by your Register of Dec. 28th, and I take this opportunity of acknowledging my obligation to you for those more correct views of the dangerous principle, upon which the fund is established, and the unconstitutional effects, which it is calculated to produce, which you have unfolded with so much perspicuity and force in that, and the Register of Jan. 18th. That the clergy are exempt from their share in the general corruption, which has diffused itself through every rank and class of the community, I will not affirm. That they partake of it in a larger measure, than the rest of the community, I will strenuously deny. All I desire is, that the same impartiality may be extended to them, which has so uniformly characterised your useful publication, and that the sins of individuals may not be imputed to the whole order. I am, Sir, &c.

CLERICUS. Feb. 7, 1806.

WEST-INDIA PLANTERS.

SIR,—In your register for Feb. 8, in your Summary of Politics, page 170, you say, "The West-India colonists have complaints, and just complaints too, of a long standing. In consequence of restraints and imposts both operating at once and with a degree of force far beyond the power of resistance, the islands have been reduced almost to a state of desperation." To convince the minister for colonial affairs and the public of the truth of the above assertion, I will, in as few words as possible, represent my own situation, and, I imagine, that of the greater part of the colonists to be as bad or worse.—My estate is in the island of Jamaica, and my crop shipped from thence this year, was 350 hogsheads of 12 cwt. of sugar each. There was also made on my estate 150 puncheons of rum. The rum made on my estate has always hitherto been sold in the island, to pay the contingent expenses of the estate, and which expenses consist in island taxes, purchase of lumber, commission to agent, &c. &c.; but, this year, owing to the restraint on our intercourse with America, it remains

unsold in my warehouse. Had it been shipped to Great Britain at the price at which rum has sold this year, it might have produced me clear 10l. sterling per puncheon. The invoice of goods shipped by me from this country for the use of my estates this year, amounted to 2,100l. sterling. The contingent expenses of my estate in Jamaica amounted this year, to 4,400l. currency. Exchange at 140 per cent., is 3,150l. sterling. These have been considerably increased this year by martial law twice proclaimed.—My sugar has sold at various prices, but the quality being moderate, it has averaged about 70s. per cwt. The duty on sugar is 27s. per cwt. Freight from Jamaica 10s. per cwt. Insurance and other charges 7 per cwt. Total 44s. per cwt. which, deducted from 70s. leaves me 26s. per cwt. nett.—Let us see how my account will stand. A hog-head of sugar 13 cwt. at 26s. per cwt., is 16l. 10s.

Therefore 350 hhds. at 16l. 10s.

each, is 5,775

Deduct bills drawn on me for contingent expenses in Jamaica. 3,150

Stores shipped from England, 2,100
—5,250

Remains 525

Here is 525l. to pay the interest of 50,000l. sterling which my estate has cost me, setting exactly 1 per cent. on my capital. If my rum had been shipped to this country and sold at the low price of 10l. per puncheon, my returns would have been 2,000l. sterling, which is 4 per cent. on my capital, and this is the boasted profit of West Indians.—But, Mr. Cobbett, from this sum of 525l. must be taken a sum for casualties, purchase of negroes, and though last not least, the interest of the debt due from me to my West India merchant, so that with my sugar selling at 70l. per cwt., and my rum unsold in Jamaica, owing to the absurd restraints put on our trade with America, my debt to my merchant is unavoidably increased, and my family without support for the ensuing year. That the above is a fair statement of my own case, and that of many of my unfortunate countrymen, may be easily ascertained by applying at the counting houses of Messrs. Longs, Messrs. Hibberts, Messrs. Taylor, or any other West India houses.—To obviate the calamities of the West India planters, it will be necessary immediately to send out orders to re-establish the trade between America and the British West India islands on

the old footing, to lessen the duties on sugar and rum, to encourage the use of the latter spirit in the British navy in preference to foreign spirit, and to check the further importation of East India sugar, by loading it with an additional duty.—The duty on East India sugar at present is 37l. per cent. *ad valorem*, now 27 s. per cwt. on sugar selling at 70s. per cwt. amounts pretty nearly to that sum. The proper time to take the above premises into consideration is at the commencement of an administration, of whom I only hope to have it in my power to say, that their conduct in every respect forms a perfect contrast to that of their predecessors.—I am, Sir, &c. A WEST INDIAN.—*Winchester, Feb. 10, 1806.*

PUBLIC PAPERS.

NAPLES AND FRANCE.—*Proclamation issued by the Emperor Napoleon, dated Schoenbrunn, Dec. 27, 1805.*

Soldiers, For ten years I have done all I could to save the King of Naples: he has done every thing in his power to destroy himself.—After the battles of Dego, of Mondovi, and of Lodi, he could give me no effectual opposition. I placed confidence in the word of this Prince, and I behaved with generosity towards him.—When the second coalition was dissolved at Marengo, the King of Naples, who was the first to commence that unjust war, abandoned at Luneville by his allies, remained alone, and without protection. He solicited my pardon, and I forgave him a second time.—A few weeks ago you were at the gates of Naples. I had sufficient reason to suspect the treachery which was intended, and to avenge the insults which I had received. Still I was generous. I acknowledged the neutrality of Naples; I ordered you to evacuate that kingdom, and, for the third time, the house of Naples was confirmed and saved.—Shall we grant pardon for a fourth time? Shall we, for a fourth time, place any confidence in a court, without truth, honour, or common sense; No! No! The Neapolitan Dynasty has ceased to reign; its existence is incompatible with the repose of Europe, and the honour of our crown.—Soldiers! march, drive into the sea, if they will wait your attack, these feeble battalions of the tyrants of the sea. Shew to the world the manner in which we punish the perjured. Lose no time in informing me, that the whole of Italy is subject to my laws, or those of my allies; that the finest country of the world is emancipated from the yoke of the most perfidious of men; that

the sacredness of treaties is avenged, and that the manes of my brave soldiers, massacred in the ports of Sicily, on their return from Egypt, after having escaped from the dangers of the sea, the deserts, and a hundred battles, are at length appeased.—Soldiers! my brother will lead you on; he is acquainted with all my plans; he is the depository of my authority; he is in full possession of my confidence; let him have yours. (Signed) NAPOLEON.

SWEDEN.—*Declaration given in by M Bildt, the Envoy for Swedish Pomerania, at the Diet of Ratisbon, Jan. 13, 1806.*

His Swedish Majesty has directed the undersigned, his Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, to declare to the Diet of the German Empire, that the offences daily committed by many Members of the Empire, against the Constitution they have sworn to maintain, are contrary to the principles of honour and virtue. His Majesty has long since foretold the unhappy consequences of the disputes which have prevailed among the members of the Empire, as well as the consequences of the want of respect which they have manifested towards the German Constitution. The sentiments and principles of His Majesty are too well known, and have been too often expressed to the Diet, for it to be necessary that he should repeat them; especially at a time when we must not speak the language of honour, and still less observe its laws, if we wish to be heard. His Majesty, therefore, considers it as beneath his dignity, from this day forwards, to take any part in the deliberations of the Diet, so long as its decisions shall be under the influence of usurpation and egotism. (Signed) VON BILDT.

FOREIGN OFFICIAL PAPER.

VIENNA.—*Proclamation to the Inhabitants of Vienna, issued by the Emperor of Austria, dated Feldsberg, Jan. 15, 1806.*

Francis II. by God's Grace, &c. &c.—When I removed from among you, I had no small inducements for believing that our separation would be but of very short duration, as it was then my fixed resolution, immediately after the conclusion of the Hungarian Diet, to return to Vienna, and to remain with you as long as my residence would be consistent with my duty; and which would have permitted me to extend the care of Government to the whole nation. This resolution was impeded by the course

of subsequent events. I thought my duty to you, and the whole mass of my subjects, called upon me to remain near the Combined Armies. I chose a representative, who enjoyed your confidence and who was every way worthy of it. I, however, interested myself for you, and made every exertion in your behalf which the untowardness of affairs would permit. You may be assured, that nothing can be attributed to a want of precaution, which has prevented the preservation of a permanent security; and that no efforts of mine were wanting in the way of negotiation, to obtain that lasting rest and security necessary for my oppressed country. This desirable event was not obtained soon enough for my wishes, but yet, as soon as the nature of a business of such importance for the present and future would allow. At present, the unhappy period of separation is past, I return to you impressed with sentiments of your inviolable attachment and fidelity, your vigilance in the preservation of order and tranquillity, your readiness to alleviate, by your benevolence the sufferings of human misery. You have left no duty without fulfilling it, no virtue unexercised: you have merited the esteem of your fellow citizens, and have obtained, by your conduct towards foreigners, the strongest claims upon my gratitude: and though at a distance from you during these several trials, I derived from these sentiments, consolation and tranquillity. But while I gave myself up to these sensations of joy, which must await my return among my loyal people of Vienna, at a period of such importance; and while, in the interim of the happy meeting between the Prince and the People, should the past be forgotten for a moment, still do not indulge the idea that I have not an intimate knowledge of your situation, or that it has escaped my mature consideration. Yes, good people! you have, indeed, sustained vexations which have shaken the foundation of your well being. I am not under misapprehensions in any respect, relative to what has passed, but I have taken pains to prosecute such an inquiry into the state of affairs, such knowledge being absolutely indispensable, as it must lead to an union of means, commensurate with our necessities.—What I have already effected, under the pressure of so many obstacles, to prevent any want of the necessaries of life, while the consumption was so much increased, is well known. I shall in future let nothing be wanting that prudence or foresight can suggest, for securing the means that may still lead to an object so dear to my wishes. Re-

main still as faithful to your Prince as you have been during the most distressing periods; support, with a public spirit, my unceasing endeavours for the good of the community: redouble your activity, give yourselves up to the noble motives of benevolence, lend no ear to unjust censure; depend upon God, and unite with me in calling upon him; so shall your wounds, though deep, soon be healed.

(Signed) FRANCIS.

Proclamation addressed by the Archduke Charles to the Austrian Army, in consequence of the conclusion of Peace at Presburgh.

His Majesty has, out of love to his people, concluded a peace. He could have relied on the valour of an army which remains unconquered by the enemy, and which has defended the rights of the Sovereign with equal firmness in Germany and in Italy; but the paternal feelings of His Majesty would not permit him to prolong the sufferings which his faithful subjects endured in a period of hostility, and he has therefore hastened to free them from the dangers which are attached to the uncertain fortune of war. The troops must now return to the peace establishment, until the protection of the throne and the country summon them to new dangers and new glory. I hope that the officers and privates will render this period of repose subservient to the improvement of the army; that they will preserve their discipline and military spirit; and that they will employ their collected experience to the advantage of the service, and the future honour of His Majesty's arms. For those who have evinced so much attachment to my person, my sincerest gratitude accompanies them. I shall seek every opportunity to prove that the good of the army is the most anxious wish of my heart.

(Signed) CHARLES, Field Marshal.

DOMESTIC OFFICIAL PAPER.

TRINIDAD.—*Proclamation, by his Excellency Thomas Hislop, Esq. Lieutenant-Governor and Commander in Chief in and over the Island of Trinidad, and its Dependencies, &c. dated Dec. 14, 1805.*

Whereas there are strong reasons to apprehend that this colony is threatened with internal dangers, from the nefarious machi-

nations of ill-disposed negroes and slaves in this community. And his Majesty's council of the said island having recommended me to adopt the measure of martial law, I have therefore thought fit, by and with the advice of his Majesty's said council, to issue this my proclamation, and do hereby declare, that from and after the publication hereof, martial law shall be, and is hereby, in force, until further orders, of which all his Majesty's liege subjects are required to take due notice, and govern themselves accordingly. And all his Majesty's good and loyal subjects of all descriptions, and of all colours, are hereby called upon to make every possible exertion to defeat the diabolical plans supposed to be in agitation. And as the purpose of this my proclamation is for the more speedy and effectually suppressing such dangers only, I do hereby, by and with the advice of his Majesty's said council, authorise all civil courts of justice, to remain and continue in force, notwithstanding martial law.—And whereas, under the present circumstances of the colony, which involve its very existence, it is proper and expedient that all persons must suffer temporary and individual inconvenience for the general welfare of the community, and that the most exemplary and summary punishments should be inflicted on all offenders, notice is hereby given, that the several patrols will be ordered to take up all negro and other slaves, who shall be in any of the streets of Port of Spain, after eight o'clock at night, and to lodge them in security during the night, that such negro or other slave or slaves, who may be found to have offended against any of the ordinances now in existence, will be immediately punished with death or otherwise, according to the regulations of the said ordinances. And in order to give the most public notice of the hour of 8 in the evening, not only the gun at the sea battery will be fired as usual, but the bells at the Spanish catholic church will be rung for the space of five minutes; and all such negro or other slave or slaves attempting to escape from the patrols, will be immediately shot. All persons concerned, are, therefore, requested to make the same known to their several slaves.—Given under my hand and seal at arms, in council, at Government-house, this 14th day of December, 1805, and in the 46th year of his Majesty's reign.—THOMAS HISLOP.—By his Excellency's command, W. HOLMES, Secretary.—God save the king.